

Administration, and Related Agencies program. I regretfully do so even though agriculture is second only to tourism in terms of revenue for my home state of Florida.

By passing this legislation in its current form, the House of Representatives is almost ensuring a veto from the White House. This bill would spend \$91.5 billion including \$18.8 in discretionary spending, and is \$993 million over the President's budget request. I am concerned that if we send this bill to the President's desk with the current excessive spending, it will be vetoed along with many of the other fiscal year 2008 Appropriations bills. It is imperative that we write a bill with real reform and realistic spending levels. My constituents of the Fourth Congressional District of Florida, along with the rest of America deserve legislation that contains realistic funding levels to ensure the safety of their food, promote conservation, provide assistance to those in need and protect the health of plants and animals through research.

LIEUTENANT MICHAEL J. SPIRITO

HON. JIM GERLACH

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 20, 2007

Mr. GERLACH. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Lieutenant Michael J. Spirito for his long-time service to the Tredyffrin Township Police Department and surrounding communities.

Lieutenant Spirito began his career in law enforcement as a police officer in West Bradford Township, Chester County, Pennsylvania in March 1972. On his way to the Tredyffrin Township Police Department, Lt. Spirito served four years with the West Chester Borough Police Department. Lt. Spirito joined the Tredyffrin Township Police in August 1977 and has been a proud member of that force from that day on.

Lt. Spirito is a graduate of Newnam College and is also a graduate of the 253rd session of the National Academy of the FBI. Born in Brooklyn, New York and raised in Delaware County, Pennsylvania, giving back to the community has always been a priority with Lt. Spirito. In addition to his service as a police officer, Lt. Spirito volunteered his services to the Aston Fire Company. In his spare time, Lt. Spirito is an avid pilot and a technology expert.

His leadership will be missed at the Tredyffrin Township Police Department, however I expect the entire County of Chester to benefit by his recent appointment as Deputy Director of Computer Services with the Chester County Government Services Department.

Madam Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me today in honoring Lieutenant Michael J. Spirito for his exemplary and dedicated service to the Tredyffrin Township Police Department and citizens it serves. His commitment and energy to make his community a better place is an example for all citizens to follow.

DR. JAMES H. BILLINGTON: TWENTY YEARS OF DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AS LIBRARIAN OF CONGRESS

HON. TOM LANTOS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 20, 2007

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, on September 14, 1987, Dr. James H. Billington, who had already distinguished himself as one of this nation's most eminent cultural historians, was installed as the 13th Librarian of Congress. As one of Dr. Billington's many admirers, I want to extend to him my warmest congratulations on his 20th anniversary in that distinguished post.

As a youngster in his native Pennsylvania, Dr. Billington began what was to be a life-long pattern of exceptional intellectual accomplishment. He was one of those habitual valedictorians—first at Lower Merion High School and then, at Princeton University. He next went as a Rhodes Scholar to Oxford University, where he completed his Ph.D.

Dr. Billington has been a professor at two of our most famous universities—Harvard and Princeton.

He is the author of several notable books on the cultural and political history of Russia—The Icon and the Axe and Fire in the Minds of Men, to name just two. Another of his books—The Face of Russia—became the basis of a three-part television series on PBS.

At last count, Dr. Billington had been awarded 33 honorary degrees from institutions all over the world, including Oxford, Moscow State University and Tbilisi State University in the Republic of Georgia.

It is in his present job, however—that of Librarian of Congress—that Dr. Billington has made truly monumental contributions to our nation's cultural and intellectual life.

"This place has a destiny to be a living encyclopedia of democracy," he said in his inaugural address, "not just a mausoleum of culture, but a catalyst for civilization."

For two decades, he has worked to fulfill that destiny.

During Dr. Billington's tenure, the holding of the Library of Congress have grown from 86 million to over 135 million items. The Library's budget has grown in that same period by over 200 percent.

In the Billington years, the Library has launched many new services—THOMAS, for example, is familiar to all of us here in Congress and the American Memory Program is being used in schools and libraries around the country.

Just recently, the Library's Packard Campus for Audio-Visual Conservation began operations in Culpeper, VA. The Packard Campus, which is the result of the largest private gift ever made to the Library, is dedicated to transferring the Library's priceless, but deteriorating, collection of moving images and recorded sounds to digital files and placing these materials in a digital storage archive.

But of all the Billington era projects, the most far-reaching is the National Digital Library. This massive effort, funded by a public-private partnership, has already placed 135 million items on the Library's web site—with many, many millions more to come.

In Japan, Madam Speaker, a person who has made exceptional cultural contributions

can be designated as a living national treasure. We don't have that tradition here in America, but if we did, I do not think that I would be alone in submitting for that honor the name of James H. Billington.

I congratulate Dr. Billington on his 20th anniversary—and I thank him for the great things that he has done for our country.

H.R. 3162—THE CHILDREN'S HEALTH AND MEDICARE PROTECTION ACT

HON. ANDER CRENSHAW

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 20, 2007

Mr. CRENSHAW. Madam Speaker, I rise today to express my displeasure with H.R. 3162—The Children's Health and Medicare Protection Act (CHAMP). The CHAMP Act would expand the existing State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) by giving nearly 5 million children who come from middle-income families access to free healthcare. This proposal pays for this expansion by cutting 3 million senior citizens' access to Medicare. This legislation would nearly double the 6.6 million children who are currently enrolled in the SCHIP program.

In my home state of Florida, the current SCHIP program level covers children in families who earn up to 200 percent above the poverty level, which amounts to a \$41,200 annual income for a family of four. I support the SCHIP program in its current form. However, I cannot support an over-expansion of the program that uses hard-earned tax dollars to provide free healthcare to children and adults who come from middle-income families that make 300 to 400 percent of the federal poverty level.

The CHAMP Act is nothing more than a veiled effort to develop a single-payer healthcare system. In order to pay for this gross expansion of socialized medicine, this proposal would cut Medicare funds for 9,746 seniors who live in the Fourth Congressional District of Florida and are currently enrolled in the Medicare Advantage Program. I believe that my constituents would be unsupportive of any measure that compromises healthcare to the elderly in an attempt to give free healthcare to middle-class children and adults who were already covered by private health insurance plans. Finally, the funding mechanism for this expansion incorporates an increase in the federal cigarette tax from 39 cents to 84 cents per pack and increases taxes on many other forms of tobacco products.

In the Fourth Congressional District of Florida, 27,416 families, or 31 percent of all families with children under the age of 18, are already eligible for either Medicaid or SCHIP under current law. Despite this fact, the Medicare cuts to seniors are exacerbated by the fact that the CHAMP Act would cover individuals up to the age of 25. Once again, the very nature of the program, which is intended to provide medical care to children, is compromised by the expansion plan to cover young adults as well.

In addition to all the concerns I mentioned above, I was unable to support this legislation due to several additional concerns I had during the consideration of this legislation. First of all this bill was clouded in secrecy until hours

before the House of Representatives voted on the bill. Additionally, the proposal authorizes a one-month waiting period for a motorized scooter even if a doctor determined the scooter was medically necessary, and reduces the amount of time that the government would rent oxygen equipment to seniors from 36 months to only 13 months. Finally, the CHAMP Act, in its current form, provides free healthcare to illegal immigrants. This complete disregard for existing law will inevitably aggravate the existing illegal immigration problem.

This legislation was an erratic attempt to reauthorize the State Children's Health Insurance program while creating an open-ended entitlement program that moves us further away from providing benefits to those most in need.

VALLEY TOWNSHIP CHIEF OF
POLICE JOE FRIEL

HON. JIM GERLACH

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 20, 2007

Mr. GERLACH. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Valley Township Chief of Police Joe Friel, a dedicated law enforcement officer who epitomizes honor and valor. Chief Friel is a graduate of the Downingtown Area School District, who then went on to attend the Delaware County Municipal Police Academy. He started his police career in Royersford Borough in Montgomery County, Pennsylvania as a part-time police officer, and then eventually moved to western Chester County. He has worked for the Caln Township Police Department, Parkesburg Borough Police Department and Sadsbury Township Police Department, before taking a part-time job with the Valley Township Bureau of Police in 1989. He was eventually hired full-time in 1990 and, in 2000, he obtained the rank of Sergeant. Following 17 years of service, the young officer, who "was just happy to be a police officer," is now called Chief Friel and is in charge of nine other officers. He is married to Annette Friel and they have two children, Joe Jr. and Brittany.

In addition to Chief Friel's duties as a police officer, he was also a D.A.R.E. officer for six years, allowing him to work closely with students and schools in an effort to keep them safe. Chief Friel has received four outstanding service awards, two from the Valley Township Bureau of Police and two from the Coatesville Area School District for his service as a D.A.R.E. officer. Chief Friel is a certified field-training officer for the Bureau of Police and has extensive training in domestic violence investigation.

During his distinguished career, he was given a commendation for the apprehension of a subject that confronted police with two fully-loaded shotguns following a violent domestic dispute, as well as a commendation from the Westwood Fire Department for helping a man who was injured in an explosion.

Prior to becoming a police officer, Chief Friel worked for Hope Ambulance Service and was a member of the patient recovery operation team, which provided air transports for sick or injured persons. He was a firefighter with the East Brandywine Fire Company and was an Emergency Medical Technician.

Chief Friel continues to believe that community policing is the foundation for a successful police team. He promotes teamwork as the key to maintaining a strong police force and believes that being respectful and fair is what has made him such a successful police officer.

In recognition for all of Chief Friel's accomplishments and leadership, the Pennsylvania American Legion recently named him Pennsylvania Law Officer of the Year. This award is a testament to the example Chief Friel presents to other brave men and women of law enforcement, as well as a reflection of the great people he has worked with over the years. I know all my colleagues join me today in commending Chief Friel for his exemplary service and reward of accomplishment and we honor him for his ongoing commitment to the safety and well-being of the residents of Valley Township and Chester County, Pennsylvania.

IN RECOGNITION OF PATTY
ARISMENDEZ

HON. JIM COSTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 20, 2007

Mr. COSTA. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Patty Arismendez of Bakersfield, California, the recipient of the National Association of Letter Carriers Heroes of the Year Award on behalf of the Western Region. This award is to honor Letter Carriers who have gone above and beyond the call of duty.

During her 17 years with the United States Postal Service, Patty worked her way up to a Letter Carrier. She spent the last 10 years working at Branch 782 of the National Association of Letter Carriers in Bakersfield, California.

Today we honor Patty Arismendez for her heroic action. On October 14, 2006, Patty saw a toddler wandering into the middle of the street. She used her vehicle to block the traffic in this busy intersection and jumped out to save the toddler. After Patty rescued the child, she searched for her family and eventually reunited them.

Patty saved the toddler from being hit by a car or kidnapped. We recognize her bravery and appreciate her devotion to her community. Patty Arismendez is an honest, compassionate woman. I wish her continued success and good luck in all of her future endeavors.

TERRORISM RISK INSURANCE RE-
VISION AND EXTENSION ACT OF
2007

SPEECH OF

HON. SHEILA JACKSON-LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 19, 2007

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2761) to extend the Terrorism Insurance Program of the Department of the Treasury, and for other purposes:

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I rise in strong support of H.R. 2761, which revises and extends the Terrorism Risk Insurance Act (TRIA) for 15 years. I commend

Chairman FRANK and Congressman CAPUANO for their fine work in shepherding this critical legislation to the House floor. This act reminds us that the true measure of our homeland's preparedness against terrorist attack is our ability to prepare for such an attack comprehensively and that includes the insurance industry which is an essential part of our economic landscape.

Mr. Chairman, the horrendous events of September 11, 2001, tested our Nation's ability to defend itself in many ways. Along with the human and emotional toll these events took on all Americans, we noticed that not only our Government but also our private industries were not sufficiently prepared to deal with the implications of a terrorist attack. Terrorist activity since September 11, 2001, has come to prove that our enemies are becoming more agile and technologically sophisticated. There is no doubt in my mind that terrorists are targeting not only our fellow citizens but also our critical infrastructure including our financial services sector, since they are determined to undermine the United States in the most fundamental of ways.

History has shown that al Qaeda and other extremist organizations will explicitly direct their efforts against American citizens and property in an effort to inflict economic harm. According to a RAND policy brief, "there is reason to believe that al Qaeda is interested in continuing its efforts to disrupt the fiscal base of the United States by attacking its borders." If al Qaeda and others are determined to strike our financial targets, public policymakers need to examine possible financial mechanisms to mitigate these effects.

Mr. Chairman, H.R. 2761 is a critical and timely legislative response to the fact that after the terrorist attacks of September 11, many insurance companies excluded terrorism events from their policies. After the 9/11 terrorist attacks, many insurance companies excluded terrorism events from their insurance policies. As a result, Congress passed the Terrorism Risk Insurance Act as a 3-year temporary program in 2002. The act created a Federal backstop to protect against terrorism related losses. In 2005, the measure was extended until 2007. TRIA is now set to expire at the end of this year, unless we today extend the law.

Since its enactment, TRIA has ensured the availability of affordable terrorism risk insurance in the marketplace and thereby fostered continued urban development and real estate development in the United States. While the TRIA program has successfully kept terrorism insurance affordable, the President's Working Group on Financial Markets' most recent report concluded that a private market for terrorism reinsurance is virtually nonexistent—especially with regard to nuclear, biological chemical and radiological (NBCR) acts of terrorism.

Mr. Chairman, I support H.R. 2761 because it provides federal backstop for private terrorism insurance. One of the strongest features of the bill is that it comes at no cost to the American taxpayer unless there is a terrorist attack.

The security of our country can not be ensured unless we make certain that the U.S. Government works hand-in-hand with the private sector to confront terrorist threats. H.R. 2761 exemplifies this idea.

The bill before us is based on the idea that it is in the best interest of our country that the